

Major Vets Bill Includes Mitchell's Medal of Honor Legislation

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today attended the bill signing ceremony at The White House for S. 1963, The Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2009. This broad-based effort to strengthen and improve health benefits for veterans includes a bill sponsored by Mitchell to ensure that Medal of Honor recipients are eligible for priority status through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

S. 1963 passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 419 to 0 on April 21, 2010, and passed the Senate by unanimous consent the following day.

"This legislation is another major step forward in meeting our obligation to our veterans and their families," said Mitchell, who serves as Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. "We have a duty to ensure that each of these heroes, as well as future Medal of Honor recipients, are eligible for health care they earned and have access to it when they need it."

Mitchell's bipartisan bill, the Medal of Honor Health Care Equity Act, H.R. 1197, was included within S. 1963. Mitchell's bill assigned priority status for Medal of Honor recipients equal to that of former prisoners of war or Purple Heart recipients, with respect to the provision of veterans' hospital care and medical services provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs. This issue was brought to Mitchell's attention by officials, including Paula Pedene, at the Carl T. Hayden VA Medical Center in Phoenix.

The overall package will provide support to family - as well as others who care for disabled, ill, or injured veterans - while enhancing health services for 1.8 million women veterans. S. 1963 also expands mental health services for veterans and health care access for veterans in rural areas, and prohibits copayments for veterans who are catastrophically disabled.

Mitchell Heads to White House for Veterans' Bill Signing

Wednesday, 05 May 2010 00:00
